



BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
94 MARKET STREET
SALEM, NEW JERSEY 08079

LEE R. WARE
Director

Office: 856-935-7510, ext. 8203
Fax: 856-935-9102

April 24, 2009

Hon. Frank LoBiondo, Congressman
2427 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman LoBiondo,

Thank you very much for your letter of April 9, 2009 concerning projects associated with the next surface transportation authorization. As Director of the Salem County Board of Chosen Freeholders, I am always looking for innovative financial solutions to some of the challenges that face the citizens of this County. One such challenge which you are more than aware is the County-owned rail line.

Salem County is one of the few County-owned rail lines in the State of New Jersey. Over the years the line has deteriorated through old age and usage. Parts of the line are over seventy five years of age. During the last five years the County has aggressively sought out grant money to upgrade the line from 85-pound rail to today's standard 100-pound or in some cases 136-pound rail to accommodate the larger rail cars in usage.

Our efforts have been successful with over \$8,000,000 in funding realized from various agencies on the State and Federal level. However, the cost of restoration per mile is approximately \$1,200,000. The County rail line extends approximately 18 miles, which leaves a lot of work to be done. The continued service of the rail through Salem County is vital to our economic well being. Mannington Mills Inc., Anchor Glass, and South Jersey Farmers Exchange are the current largest users of the rail. These companies alone account for over 1,500 jobs and millions of dollars for the local economy.

Every rail car equals five tractor trailers of goods. When you do the math, the existence of the rail helps these industries remain operating and residents employed in a very tough economic climate.

The County of Salem is applying for \$1,500,000 to fund continued upgrade and restoration of the Salem County Rail line. This upgrade will enhance the service to our current customers and attract new clients to help with the economic recovery of Salem County.

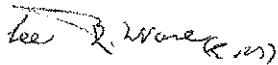
In the body of our application you will see how the County has utilized the funds that we have already received. As the County moves forward with the restoration of the rail, continued success of our current customers is imperative to protect jobs. Further, attracting new customers is what will drive our County's future.

The Freeholder Board unanimously adopted as one of their 2009 goals the continued upgrade and restoration of the rail line. To that end I endorse this application for \$1,500,000. The County of Salem has budgeted \$300,000 in the 2009 capital budget for the required 20% match for this project if the County should be successful.

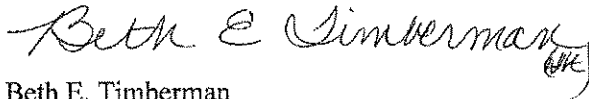
As the County moves forward with this plan, implementation public hearings will be held to not only hear the thoughts of the public, but to gain further information to address their needs within the County.

We thank you for this opportunity and look forward to further the cooperation between you and Salem County. Please feel free to reach out to us at any time.

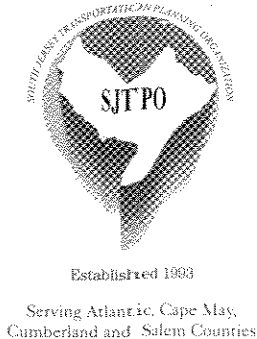
Sincerely,



Lee R. Ware, Director



Beth E. Timberman
Chairperson, Transportation



SOUTH JERSEY TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Daniel Beyel, Cape May County
Chairman

Frank Sutton, Atlantic County
Vice-Chairman

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Robert Romano, City of Vineland
Beth E. Timberman, Salem County
Kathleen Aufschneider, SJTA
Pippa Woods, NJ Transit
Thomas A. Wospil, NJDOT

April 24, 2009

Hon. Frank A. LoBiondo
Member of Congress
2427 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC, 20515-3002

Dear Congressman LoBiondo:

I am writing in support of the Replacement of Oldman's Trestle project in Pilesgrove Township, submitted by Salem County for consideration as a High Priority Project in the upcoming reauthorization of SAFETEA – LU. The County of Salem Transportation Department, owner of the 18 miles stretch of the Salem County Railroad, from Swedesboro to Salem City, wishes to replace the 100-year old timber and steel train trestle bridge structure, crossing Oldman's Creek.

This trestle has been repaired numerous times over the past ten (10) years and is in dire need for complete replacement. The bridge has been deemed structurally unsound and action is required. The new bridge structure, as permitted, will be constructed in the same footprint and alignment as the existing bridge, thus not creating any adverse environmental impacts. The new bridge will be constructed of concrete and steel piles and steel girders.

Salem County is seeking \$3,145,000 in federal funding for the project, and is confident that if funded, it can be constructed within five years.

The South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization fully supports the Almond Road resurfacing project.

Should this project be included in the SAFETEA – LU reauthorization, all of our public involvement procedures for the Transportation Improvement Program will be maintained, including formal public notice, website posting, and presentation at an open public meeting.

No other federal, State, local, or private funding sources are anticipated to be used to advance this project.

April 24, 2009
Hon. Frank A. LoBiondo
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Thank you for your consideration of this critical project, and please do not hesitate to contact me for further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy G. Chelius". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Timothy G. Chelius, P.P., AICP
Executive Director

TGC:mal

Cc: Hon. Lee Ware, Director, Salem County Board of Chosen Freeholders